

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are all the claims pending in the application. Applicants have amended claims 7-12 in order to better define the invention. Applicants also have cancelled claims 1-6 and 13 without prejudice to their filing in a divisional application.

Election/Restriction

The Examiner has made the restriction requirement final. Applicants are canceling the non elected claims without prejudice or disclaimer, as previously noted.

Claim Objections

Claim 10 is objected to as being of improper dependent form for failure to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. The Examiner also has asserted that the range "not higher than 400 degrees" is not further limiting claim 7. Applicants have amended the claims in order to overcome the claim objections, as subsequently explained.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 7-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner asserts that it is unclear whether the claimed coefficient of expansion must be obtained throughout the range of 30-800°C. Applicants have amended the claims in order to remedy the asserted indefiniteness of the claims.

In amending claims 7-12, the phrase "at (a temperature of) 30-800°C" and "at a temperature not higher than 400°C " are changed to --at 800°C -- and --at 400°C --, respectively, with reference to the description on page 16, line 4; Page 17, lines 19-20; page 18, lines 11 and 23-24.

The reasons for the change is that a coefficient of linear expansion at (a temperature of) 30-800°C corresponds approximately to a coefficient of linear (thermal) expansion at 800°C (Basic temp: 30°C) and that a coefficient of linear expansion at a temperature not higher than

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400°C corresponds to a coefficient of linear expansion at 30-400°C and also corresponds approximately to a coefficient of linear (thermal) expansion at 400°C (Basic temp: 30°C).

The Examiner's objection to claim 8, based upon the phrase "60% or more" is based upon an issue of whether that working rate could not be achieved after a previously described 50% working rate during each rolling in two intersecting directions. Applicants have amended the claim to state that the rate is "75% or more" in accordance with the interview conducted on November 24, 2003. To the extent that comments in the Amendment filed on September 3, 2003 are inconsistent, they are withdrawn.

Finally, Claim 9 is rewritten into an independent form.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

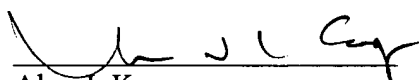
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Date: March 5, 2004

Respectfully submitted,


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